

ing 1.5% is used in increasing the filler. The resulting joint compound is acceptable if used at about 500 Brabender units.

Although the invention has been described in connection with certain preferred embodiments, it is not intended that it be limited thereto. For example, small amounts of asbestos when added to the invention will create an acceptable compound, provided the amount does not exceed the limits imposed by OSHA standards. Thus, it is intended that it cover all equivalents, alternate arrangements, and embodiments as may be included within the scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A composition which when mixed with water forms a non-leveling joint compound having properties suitable for use in finishing joints between wallboards [even when], *said composition being free of asbestos fibers[,] and comprising the following ingredients in amounts based on the total dry weight of the composition:*

- a filler selected from the group consisting of calcium carbonate and calcium sulfate in an amount of between about 37 and 92 percent;
- a binder in an amount of between about 1 and 7 percent;
- attapulugus clay in an amount of between about 0.5 and 6 percent; and
- at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of;
- a water-holding agent in an amount of between about 0.1 and 2.0 percent; and
- a slip-inducing colloid in an amount of between about 0.1 and 2.0 percent selected from the group consisting of modified montmorillonite clay gel and xanthan gum,

*said joint compound being characterized by having desirable working properties including non-leveling and slip properties which heretofore were achieved through the addition of asbestos and which properties are provided herein by substituting attapulugus clay to provide the pseudoplasticity necessary for obtaining said desired properties while avoiding the health hazards associated with the use of asbestos.*

2. The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein said water-holding agent is sodium carboxymethylcellulose having a degree of substitution less than about 0.7.

3. The composition as defined in claim 1, comprising both said water-holding agent and said slip-inducing colloid.

4. The composition as defined in claim 3, wherein said slip-inducing colloid is modified montmorillonite clay gel.

5. The composition as defined in claim 3, wherein said slip-inducing colloid is xanthan gum.

6. The composition as defined in claim 3, wherein said water-holding agent is sodium carboxymethylcellulose having a degree of substitution less than about 0.7.

7. The composition as defined in claim 1, where said filler is calcium carbonate.

8. The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein said filler is calcium sulfate dihydrate.

9. The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein said filler is calcium sulfate hemihydrate.

10. The composition as defined in claim 1, wherein said binder is a polyvinyl acetate emulsion.

11. A ready-mixed non-leveling joint compound having properties suitable for use in coating joints between gypsum wallboards [even when] *said composition being free of asbestos fibers[,] and comprising the following ingredients in amounts based on the total dry weight of the composition:*

- water;
- a filler selected from the group consisting of calcium carbonate and calcium sulfate in an amount of between about 37 and 92 percent;
- a polyvinyl acetate emulsion in an amount of between about 1 and 7 percent;
- a slip-inducing colloid in an amount of between about 0.1 and 2.0 percent selected from the group consisting of modified montmorillonite clay gel and xanthan gum; and
- attapulugus clay in an amount of between about 0.5 and 6.0 percent,

*said joint compound being characterized by having desirable working properties including non-leveling and slip properties which heretofore were achieved through the addition of asbestos and which properties are provided herein by substituting attapulugus clay to provide the pseudoplasticity necessary for obtaining said desired properties while avoiding the health hazards associated with the use of asbestos.*

12. The composition as defined in claim 11, additionally comprising sodium carboxymethylcellulose in an amount of between about 0.1 and 2.0 percent.

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